



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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JUNE 18, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WOMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO THREATS, DAMAGING GOVERNMENT PROPERTY

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a woman pleaded guilty in federal court today to threatening federal judges and other government officials, and to damaging government property at the federal courthouse.

Helen D. Woodson, 60, of Butler, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Chief Judge Dean Whipple this morning to a six-count federal information that charges her with threatening federal judges and an Air Force official by mail and threatening others at the federal courthouse by telephone, and with spilling red paint on the security counter and screening device at the federal courthouse.

By pleading guilty today, **Woodson** admitted that on two separate occasions on March 9 and 10, 2004, she mailed letters addressed to “All Federal Judges” at the address of the federal courthouse. Those letters, Graves said, contained a threat to injure the judges and others. **Woodson** also admitted that on two separate occasions on March 9 and 10, 2004, she mailed letters addressed to “Base Commander” at the address of the Whiteman Air Force Base. Those letters also contained threats to the base commander and others, Graves said.

On March 10, 2004, **Woodson** used a prepaid calling card to call the court clerk’s office, Graves said. **Woodson** admitted that she threatened an employee in the clerk’s office by stating, “This is a warning: There is a weapon of mass destruction in your office. Get out now!” Graves added that no bomb or other weapon of mass destruction was ever found.

Less than 10 minutes after phoning the threat, Graves said, **Woodson** intentionally spilled a mixture of red paint and cranberry juice – mixed to represent blood – on the security counter and screening device at the security checkpoint in the lobby of the federal courthouse. **Woodson** admitted to causing more than \$1,000 in damage to government property.

Under federal statutes, **Woodson** could be subject to a sentence of up to 10 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000. Her sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. Sentencing hearings will be scheduled after the completion of presentence investigations by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David A. Barnes. It was investigated by the U. S. Marshal's Service, the U. S. Postal Inspection Service and the Federal Protection Service.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow